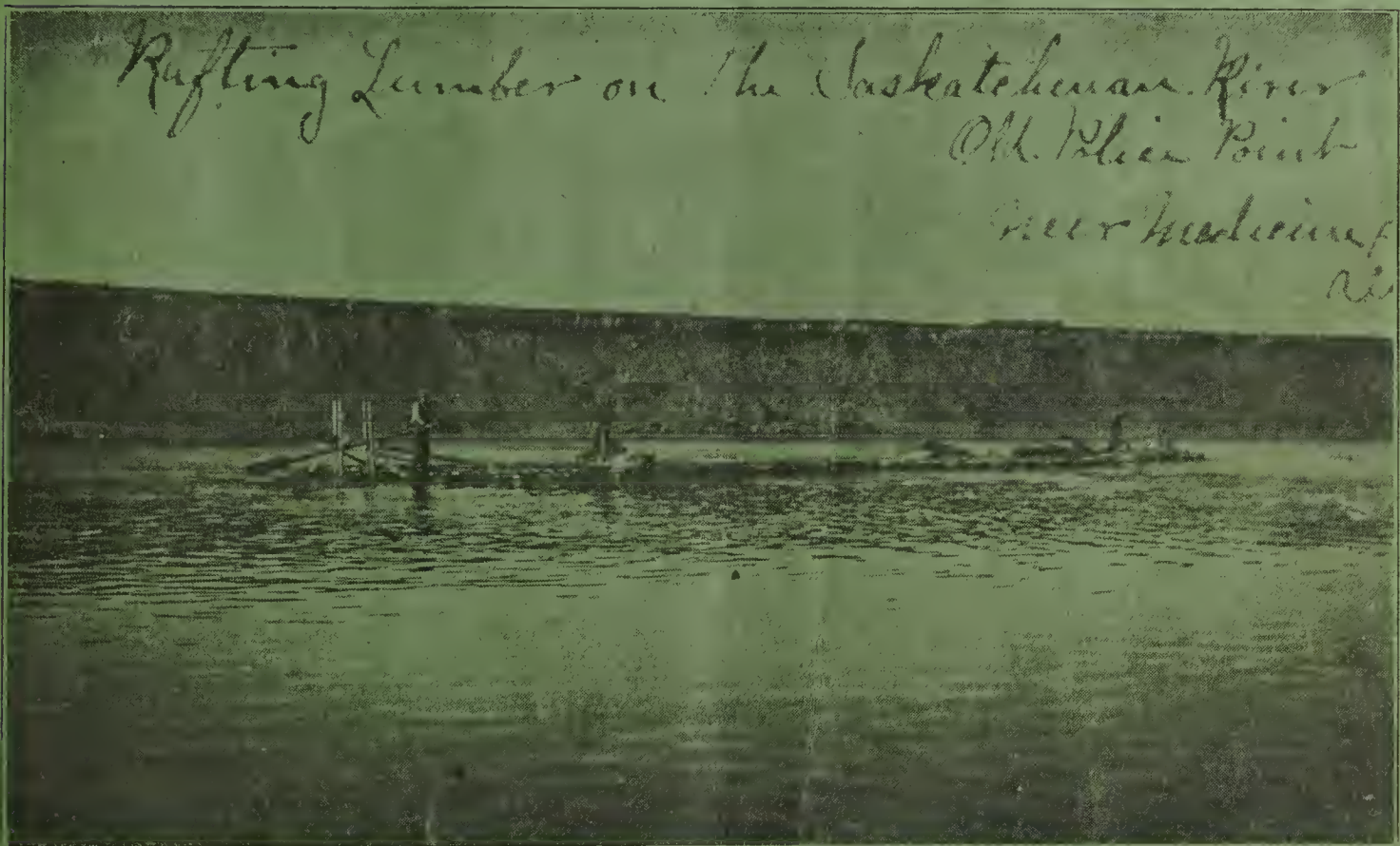


The
Settlement and Development
of
"THE FORKS"



An area comprising several hundred square miles
of excellent farming land lying between the Red
Deer River and the South Saskatchewan River

ALBERTA

I BEG to thank the advertisers in this book for the general support, and the people of the district, both village and country, for their very hearty support and co-operation with me in writing up the history and development of this district

E. A. TUCKER,

Chairman, Social Plains U.F.A.

Advertising Committee

HISTORY OF THE FORKS and EMPRESS

The history of the Forks and surrounding country dates from about 1,800, when the Red Deer and Saskatchewan River Valleys were largely inhabited by tribes of the Crees, Sottos and Assiniboine Indians on the east and the Blackfoot, Pegans, Blood and Sarcees on the West. The forks of the Red Deer and the Medicine Rivers was then the line of demarcation between the Eastern and Western tribes, and this particular district lying within a radius of fifty miles of the forks was the scene of many fierce battles during the summer seasons. This territory was sort of neutral zone and comparatively safe during the winters. The Red Deer Valley for several miles west from the forks, the Cross-Bar Creek coulee, and the district surrounding Cabri Lake are rich in Indian lore and the stone tepee rings of Indian villages and camps are still



Breaking in Early Days

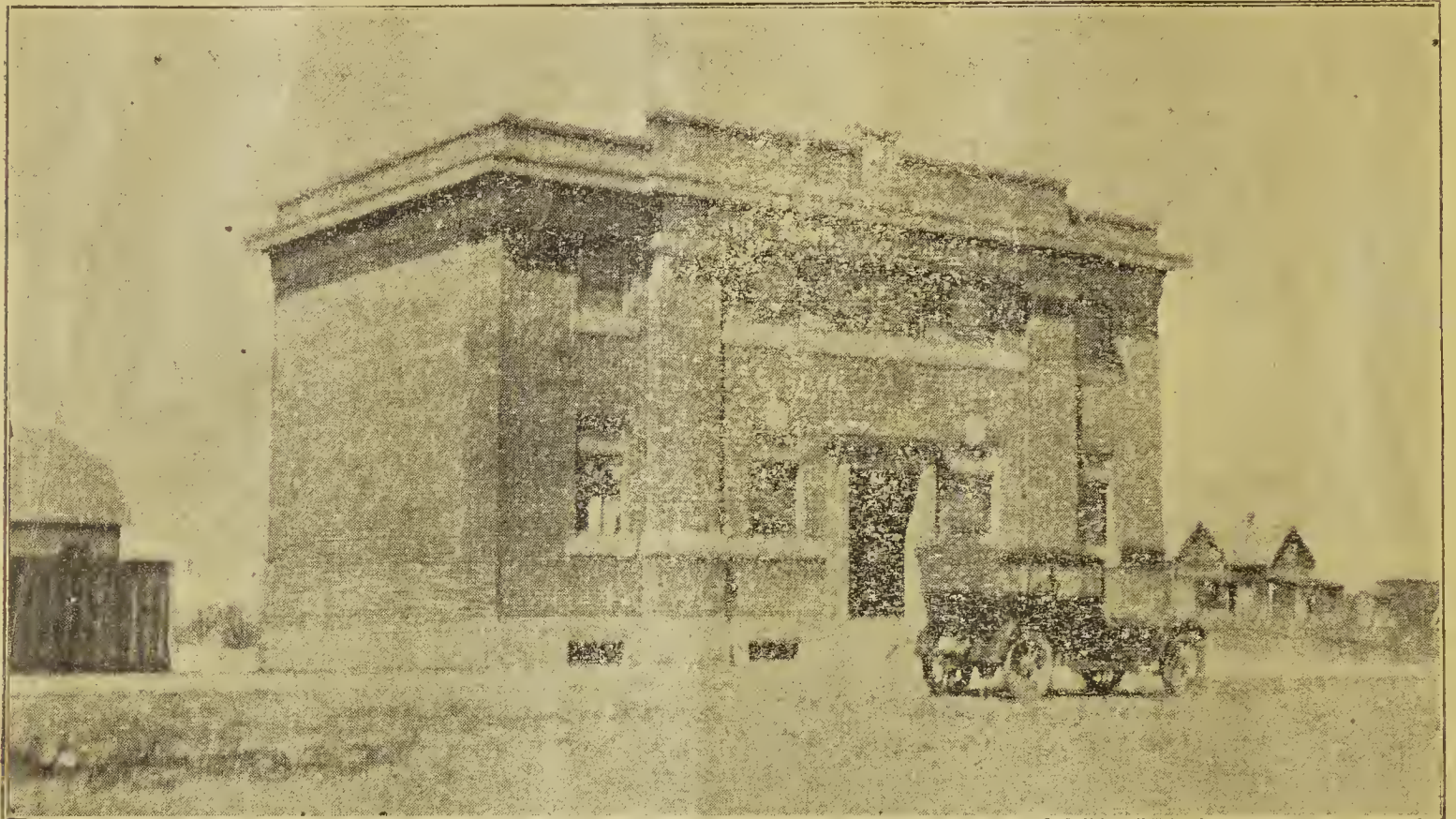
to be seen in the district. Earth entrenchments thrown up by the Indians in battle at advantageous points are still in evidence. One of these battles took place in 1877 about five miles up the Cross Bar Creek, at the forks of two creeks, where thirteen Crees were ambushed by a band of Blackfoots and held without food or water for two days and three nights, making their escape through the Blackfoot lines during the third night. The earth mounds are still in evidence where the thirteen Crees dug themselves in a short distance from the forks of the two creeks. The monster outline image of a man, some fifty feet in length made of stones laid in the earth, is still to be seen in the hills near Cabri Lake. No doubt this marks the burial place of some noted Indian Chief killed in battle. The Crees eventually drove the Blackfoot and Bloods west into the mountains and 1877-8 was about the last of the battles to take place in this vicinity between the eastern and western tribes. Up to this time, the district was avoided by traders and trappers as it was considered unsafe to attempt to ply their trades on account of the warring nature of the Indians.

The Canadian Bank of Commerce

Paid Up Capital
\$15,000,000

Empress Branch

Reserve Fund
\$15,000,000



Our new office erected 1919. We invite you to call and inspect the building.

Banking Credit for Farmers

For over fifty years this Bank has been engaged in extending credits to farmers for grain growing and livestock purposes. We aim to co-operate with the farmers in building up the agricultural interest of the West.

Banking Service

We desire to make our service more than a mere advertising word. Our staff understands service to mean the practical application of the Golden Rule.

E. L. Kenny,
Manager.

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Fort Chesterfield, the ruins of which are still visible, was located on the river flat, about ten miles east of Empress, and some three miles east of the forks, on land recently homesteaded by Lawrence Readel, of Empress. The Fort was constructed about 1820 by an American named Chesterfield. The name of Fort as applied to this layout belied the structure as it was in reality built as a stockade for the protection of whiskey runners from the U. S. from the Indians. The place was conducted for about twenty years by Chesterfield. About 1840 a Blackfoot Indian was shot by one of Chesterfield's men, and the Indians prepared to make war on the Fort next day, but when they returned to the attack the place had been abandoned by Chesterfield and his whole crew and was never again occupied.



Just as Sure as This House Came from the Ground



The Ground Produced This One. Bert Leeper and Family, 1914, Social Plains

In 1870-71, Sir William F. Butler, G.C.B., camped for the winter at the forks with his Indian guides and his companion, Donogh Driscoll. In his book, "Red Cloud," he gives the Sioux's description of the Forks as follows: "I don't know of any fitter place for the winter camp in all the hundreds of miles that are around us. Where two rivers come together, there stands, sheltered among the hills, a clump of pine trees. The points of the rivers are well wooded, and the marshes along the banks hold wild vetch, and the pea plant of the prairie grows through the underbrush high above the snow, giving food to horses in the worst seasons of the year." The two rivers are spoken of as the "Red Deer and the Medicine," now called the South Saskatchewan.

Don't Forget

Oh! Don't Forget

We Are Agents For--

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PLYMOUTH CORDAGE CO.

DOMINION NOBBY TREAD CASINGS

GREAT WEST SADDLERY CO.

DE LAVAL CREAM SEPARATORS

VICTOR GRAM-O-PHONES and RECORDS

And that a few extra miles or steps will save you Money

Come in and let us prove that we can save you Money

N. D. STOREY

Empress, Alberta

Forks Meat Market

Fresh and Cured
Meats, Poultry in
Season

*We will buy your choice
Beef, Pork and Mutton*

Your Patronage will be
appreciated

Robert L. Arthur
Empress :: Alberta

Pullen & Son

Let Us Buy
Your Stock

Highest Cash
Price Paid

Pullen & Son

EMPRESS - ALTA.

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Mrs. William McKay, one of the early pioneers of the Forks district, states that her father, Alec Cayin, came to the Forks as a boy of twelve, about 1860. At that time there was a half-breed settlement near the forks on what was then known as "Chesterfield Flat." Mrs. McKay's father and grandfather were then acting as guides for a party of miners which they took through to the Rockies, the two later returning down the Red Deer in Buffalo skin canoes.

William ("Billie") McKay, the oldest living pioneer of this district states that his father, Edward McKay was formerly a mail carrier for the Hudson's Bay Company between a fort on the Missouri River to Fort Garry, now Winnipeg. The family came to Fort Walsh in 1875, and in the winter of 1879-80, "Billie," then a lad of sixteen, was sent north to the forks with a bunch of horses to winter there. This territory was considered as a sort of neutral zone during the winter, and horses were comparatively safe from theft by the Indians. During that winter there was a camp of some 300 Crees



Fording the Saskatchewan

east of the Forks, and a half-breed village of about 100 families at the Forks. The principal occupation during the winter was that of hunting buffalo in the dark Sand Hills, which are located about twenty miles north of the river. These hills received their name from the Indians owing to a total eclipse of the sun taking place during a battle between the Crees and Bloods some time in the early seventies. The buffalos were here by the thousands at that time, but the main herd was driven south into Montana about 1881. The last buffalos killed in this district were shot by Sam McKay, "Billie's" brother at a point about twenty miles north of the present Kennedy Bros.' ranch, when two bulls were killed out of a herd of eleven. The country was practically depopulated from 1881 until about 1885, when the first ranchers made their appearance. These were Theodore Palmer, and another man named McAnnible, who located on the south side of the Saskatchewan River, on what is now known as Morris Moore's ranch. Andrew and Alec Gordon located the Gordon ranch in 1896, and Messrs. William and Leslie Shannon located their ranch on the north side of the Red Deer near the forks the same year. W. T. (Red Deer) Smith, of Big Barn fame, who erected the largest barn on this continent, located his ranch on the Saskatchewan,

SEE
M. G. BOYD

For everything in--

Shelf and Heavy Hardware
McClary's Famous Ranges
Sharples' Separators
Sherwin-Williams Paint

PIONEER HARDWARE
Empress

*High Grade Farm
Machinery Oil*

*Gas Tractors
and Threshing
Machine*

*All Makes of Plow
Shares*

If we have not what you want we
will get it. Try us.

Tucker Bros.
EMPRESS, ALBERTA

WE ARE HERE TO SERVE

Were it necessary to wear Armour these days we'd
be Tinsmiths or Blacksmiths. You don't want a
suit of Armour; so we don't keep it. Our purpose
is to carry what the Public Demands.

SUITS

From
\$18.00
to
\$50.00

It is our business to keep in stock the kind of
merchandise you want. We have no axe to grind.
We merely serve the public the best way we know.

The same courtesy and service goes with a collar-
button, a suit of overalls or a fifty dollar suit.

OVERALLS

From
\$2.00
to
\$4.00

M. A. BLODGETT

Head-To-Toe Outfitter

EMPRESS, ALBERTA

The Busy Corner

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in 1897. Carr Bros., farther down the river, at 16 Mile Coulee, also came in the same year. James Ray, now police magistrate of Medicine Hat, located what is now known as the Fitger ranch in 1897, which was in turn sold to Fergus Kennedy & Sons, who later sold to Eugene Fitger and took up their present location on the North side of the Red Deer River. Harvey, Graham and James Massingill located the "76" ranch on the Saskatchewan River in 1899. A. K. Walker located in the 12 Mile Sand Hills in 1903, as did H. W. Beatty in the 30 Mile Sand Hills the same year. C. F. Grant, of Nebraska, located his ranch on the south side of the Saskatchewan in 1902, near the present ferry site. Mr. Grant brought in 900 head of Mexican cattle in the fall of 1902, of which only 120 head survived the winter. This was the first appearance of what is commonly known as the "nose fly" which no doubt came in with these Mexican cattle. The Rideau Ranching Company located their ranch on the Chesterfield Flat in 1903, with "Jack" Allan as manager. A Frenchman, named Bureseau, located the Cross-Bar ranch on the north side of the Red Deer, opposite the present townsite of Empress, in 1896. This ranch was later sold to Messrs. Allan and Van Cleave. John Dargie, another of the old-timers, came in with "Red Deer" Smith, in 1896, and has resided in the district continuously since that time. The winter of 1896-7 was an especially hard one for the ranchers, most of them sustaining a 50 per cent. loss of their stock, owing to the deep snow and lack of feed. The spring of 1902 was the highest water known within the memories of any of the old-timers in both the rivers, The Red Deer Valley being like a vast lake from coulee to coulee on either side. Some of the drift wood can still be seen in the trees, high up on the banks from the present water line deposited there by the flood of that year.

A half-breed named Gusto LaValle was shot by the Blood Indians in 1883 on the trail east from the present site of the East ferry. The Indians stole about seventy-five head of horses belonging to LaValle, and trailed them west. These horses were recovered the next spring by a scotchman named George Gunn, father-in-law of LaValle, on the Belly River, near McLeod.

The only kind of bears ever seen along the Red Deer Valley were grisleys. the last one to be killed in this vicinity was killed by Leslie Shannon in the spring of 1900, on what was then known as the Cherry Flats, near where A. D. Bishop now lives.

The Hudson's Bay Company built a temporary trading post on the North side of the Red Deer, a short distance west of the Forks, and near the Shannon Bros.' ranch. This post was built about 1810, but only occupied for about two years and then abandoned.

The old Mounted Police trail from Fort Walsh to Battleford crossed the Saskatchewan River at a ford a short distance below the forks. Captain Parker, of Medicine Hat, relates an incident in which he nearly lost his life at the Forks. He had arrested an Indian for horse stealing, and allowed the Indian to go into his tepee for some clothes. At a warning cry of "lookout" from the Indian's breed wife, he burst into the tent just in time to find the Indian slipping a cartridge into his rifle with which he fully intended to "finish" the Captain.

W. S. Moorhead, a passenger conductor on the Empress line, formerly with the R.N.W.M.P., relates some stirring incidents taking place while he was a member of the Maple Creek detachment, at and near the forks, in which he was a participant.

Thomas and Robert Howse were among the early settlers of the Empress district. An employee of the Shannon Bros., filed on the original Empress townsite as a homestead and pre-emption, but left the country and never did his homestead duties. The Canadian Pacific Railway Company later traded Grant lands for the present townsite of Empress, the sale of lots taking place at Medicine Hat on November 6th, 1913.

The Empress Farm Lands Company

DEALERS IN

FARM LANDS

EXCLUSIVELY

*See our List for Farm Bargains
Good Listings Wanted*

For Information See Either

R. M. Henderson
President

John Cusack
Manager

*Fire, Life and Accident
Insurance*

*Real Estate, Loans and
Insurance*

*Real Estate and Loans
Official Agent, C.P.R., D. N.R.
Townsite of Empress*

*Sub. Agent Dominion
Lands*

*Notary Public and
Conveyancer*

*The Oldest Empress
Agency*

EMPRESS - ALBERTA

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There were two squatters' townsites formed in the spring of 1913, known as East and West Empress, one mile apart. East Empress was located on the south end of the present townsite and among the pioneers were Messrs. N. D. Storey, hardware; R. G. McIntyre, garage; John Cusack, real estate and insurance; M. A. Blodgett; Alfred Hankin, editor of Empress Express.

Dr. William Robertson opened the first store and post office in January, 1913, midway between east and west Empress. Among the pioneers of West Empress were Messrs. H. P. Gregg, gents' furnishings; H. J. Read, manager first bank to locate in Empress; G. L. Brown, druggist; Boyd & Sparling, hardware; Peters & Malton, hardware; Cole & Belfie, grocers; B. L. Dawdy, jewellery; M. L. Haggins, real estate; Mother Leonard, cafe.

For several weeks after the sale of lots, a procession of houses, stores and buildings of all kinds went across the prairie from West Empress to the present townsite.

The first celebration to be held in Empress was on July 1st, 1913, with Geo. A. Scoville, deceased, as master of ceremonies. There were successive July 1st cele-



Social Plains First Post Office

brations, held in 1914 and 1915, and the big Empress Stampede was held on June 21st and 22nd, 1916. Agricultural fairs were held in the years 1915-16-18 and 19. The summer Chautauqua movement was started in Empress, Aug. 1-7, 1918.

The first church service to be held in Empress was held in the partially completed real estate office of M. L. Haggins, during May, 1913, services being conducted by Cecil E. Atkinson. The first Anglican services were held in the Storey Furniture store, in East Empress, and were conducted by the Rev. Chas. Harrington, of Alsask.

The first lumber brought to Empress was rafted down the Saskatchewan River by the Revelstoke Sawmill Co., with John McMoran in charge of the raft. This was in June of 1912. The first building constructed in the town was the store building of Dr. Wm. Robertson.

The first meeting of the Empress Board of Trade was held on May 28th, 1913, in West Empress. The Empress Board of Trade has been an active organization for the advancement of all interests for the good of the town from the very start, and some



If your health is below normal, consult a Chiropractor. I have one of the best equipped Chiropractic offices in Western Canada, and can handle the most difficult cases with a remarkable degree of success.

While in Calgary, I would be pleased to have prospective patients call on me, and I will take pleasure in explaining what Chiropractic can do for you.

DR. C. E. MESSENGER

304 LEESON-LINEHAM BLOCK, CALGARY

Office equipped with X-ray Laboratory

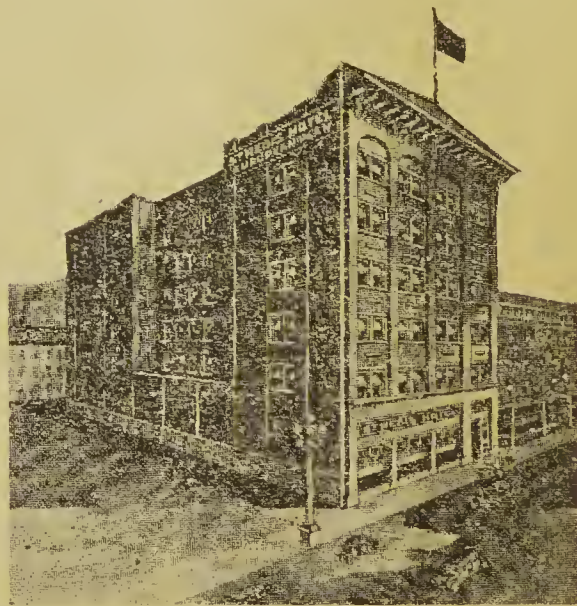
WHEN IN EMPRESS TRY

Brodie's

For Your
*Groceries, Fruits,
Crockery, Boots
and Shoes and
Men's Wear.*

We Pay You the Highest
Prices for Your Produce.

W. R. Brodie



The House of Personal Service
In the Heart of the City

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Calgary's Leading Commercial Hotel

CALGARY, ALBERTA

A. M. DeLong, Managing Director

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Barrister, Solicitor, Notary

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very commendable work has been done. Among the noted achievements of the Board is the construction of the traffic bridge over the Red Deer River, which was started by the Board in the winter of 1917, and completed by the Alberta Government during the fall of the same year. Messrs. R. M. Henderson, as Pres., and M. A. Blodgett, as Secretary, were elected to office on January 26th, 1916, and have held these offices continuously since that time.

The steel reached Empress during May, 1914, and a regular train service was inaugurated in the spring of 1915.

Empress at present comprises approximately 800 inhabitants, with nearly every line of business represented. A first-class hotel, two banks, high school and a movement is under way for the establishment of a ten-ward municipal hospital.

The Village of Empress was incorporated in March, 1914, and the first meeting of the council held on March 23rd, with D. McEachern as reeve, and Messrs. Storey and Gregg as councillors. Empress School District was formed July 4th, 1914, and the first meeting of the Board held on July 7th. Messrs. Henderson, Stritzel and Dawdy were the first trustees elected with B. L. Dawdy as president of the board.

Frank Phillips and I, John McMorran, chanced to meet in the Village of Barons on the Calgary-Lethbridge line of the C. P. R., on April 18th, 1911, as we were on the lookout for land.

Receiving an invitation from another old neighbor who had located land some 25 miles north of the town, then known as Carlstadt, now Alderson, to visit him and look the country over in that district, we decided to do so. On arriving at Calstadt, we engaged a team from the liveryman there and bought provisions for a six days' trip. Heading north in an almost direct line, taking a survey of the country, we finally came in sight of the Red Deer River, and camped for the night where the Town of Jenner now stands. The following morning we decided to continue our search in an easterly direction, following the north line of township 21, and the land we travelled through being rough and hilly did not impress us very favorably at that stage of our journey. In the afternoon, the topography of the country began to improve, giving us some encouragement to go ahead. We finally came upon a nice lying stretch of country, and camped that evening a little west of where the Town of Cavendish now stands. We spent some time that evening looking over the surrounding country. Our government plans showed some filings had been taken on the land adjoining the Red Deer River. We came upon the first sign of habitation in the form of a dugout which someone had seemingly occupied the previous winter. The following morning, at breakfast, Phillips made the suggestion that we cross the Government Reserve, in range 3, and look at the country lying between the two rivers. On starting out we followed the north line of township 21, making use of our compass and distant land marks for guidance. Entering range 2, we proceeded in a south-easterly direction, finally unhitching our hardy little team on that beautiful stretch of land, where the farm of Mr. S. Ferguson now stands. Spring had come nearly and having been burned over the previous fall, the country was covered with a new growth of grass about two inches long, making one of the prettiest landscapes I ever saw. We felt well repaid for all our trouble, so elated did we feel that in preparing our meager dinner, our provisions being nearly exhausted, my partner persisted in singing the chorus of "Home Sweet Home." A further survey of the district confirmed our opinion of it as the finest piece of the country we had seen from the time we left Barons. So hitching up our team, we started for Medicine Hat, arriving there on the evening of April 24. Mr. Phillips wired to Mr. Doyle and Mr. H. England, who arrived the following morning, and we proceeded to the land office and filed on our selection. Then the rush for

Empress Trading Co.

The Store with the goods and
the prices right

*Groceries, Dry Goods,
Boots and Shoes,
Etc., Etc.*

A  Deal

J. E. KIRNER

Alberta Machine Shop and Garage

All kinds of repair work done
and Acetylene Welding

W. C. BOYD

Proprietor

Empress :: Alberta

"Ford Garage" For Service

Don't forget to
have your car
put in shape be-
fore the harvest
rush.

J. Williamson

Empress - Alberta

G. G. SARVIS

High Class Berkshire,
that bacon hog.

A son of Ames Rival
at the head of our herd.

Write for Prices.

G. G. Sarvis, Prop.

land began, and in the next four months practically all the available land had been taken. The following morning Phillips started back to Alderson. Completing the journey, we estimated we had travelled 250 miles in 5 1-2 days, but the ponies being of the true cayuse blood had stood the trip well. After resting in the Hat we returned the next evening for two or three days. We got the idea in our heads of trying the river route, and taking out lumber to start on our shacks. Purchasing about 2,000 feet in all we built a raft about 14 feet square, and with our tent and stove and provisions to last about ten days, we started out. Having no previous experiences of this kind, all our steering apparatus consisted of was a pole, which proved to be entirely useless as a means of guidance in the swift current, every rock and obstruction in the river seemed to possess some devilish magnetic influence over our track. Our first real disaster occurred the second evening. We had progressed about 40 miles by this time and were about to make a landing as it threatened to rain, when we ran square onto a niggerhead, driving the front end of the raft up out of the water, the current pulling the rear end down, until about three-quarters of the raft was under the water, and we had a wild scramble to save our provisions which were floating around in the water,



At Social Plains Picnic

every item being thoroughly soaked which we were compelled to masticate for the next seven days. Getting out in the water up to the waist, holding onto the raft to keep being swept from our feet, we managed to move the raft far enough to raise part of it clear. We decided we were there for the night at least, and our bunk that night was a strip about five feet wide by eight which was above water. We had just crawled into our bed and pulled the tent canvas to protect us from the weather, when it started a terrific downpour of rain, lasting till nearly six the following morning. We slept very carefully that night, as one false move or roll meant a duck in the river, but the very ridiculousness of our position put us in a sort of hilarious good humor. The following morning, after about two hours hard work, we got our craft going again. Landing further down we took a day off to dry our clothes and blankets and put our craft in shape, building an oarlock at each end. The remainder of our journey was concluded without any further mishaps. Our methods of knowing our location as we went along was a map of the river, which we checked as we went, finally landing at

The
**Empress Drug
Company**

For
Quality
and
Service

Empress - Alberta

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Sandy Point. On landing, we found ourselves to be within two hundred yards of the ranch buildings of Mr. McDonald, whom we soon got acquainted with, and who treated us well and spoke well of the district and of the agricultural possibilities it held in the near future, differing very much from the reception usually given to first settlers entering a new district. The following morning we set out on foot to take another look at our land and locate a spot for our buildings, returning that evening more optimistic than ever about the district, and made arrangements with Mr. McDonald to haul our lumber. Loading it up we started out and by noon we were busy driving nails, and working like niggers on our little 12 by 14 shacks, about 30 feet apart, with the line of our land between us. But our troubles were not over. On our previous trip we had not any trouble finding water in patches left from the spring thaw, but they seemed to have all dried up in the interval, leaving us a distance of between five and six miles from water, with the alternative of either carrying it from Princess Creek, on the west, or the Saskatchewan River on the east. We set out that night on the hunt for water in the direction of Princess Spring, but the night turned very dark and foggy, with the result that we got lost and had to sleep out that night. When daylight came we got our bearings again and started with our empty pail for what was supposed to represent home. Arriving at our shacks, we proceeded to enjoy our breakfast, consisting of two slices of water-soaked bread and a small piece of bacon without tea. After a short rest, we grabbed our pail and started our journey in a south-easterly direction to try our luck. Reaching the Saskatchewan River close to where the farm of Mr. Stone now stands, we obtained our first drink in 36 hours. The finest brew was not in it with that drink of water. Filling our pail, we started back again. Any person who is ambitious as an athlete and feels the need of training can try packing a three and a half gallon pail of water six miles on the above diet. Reaching the shacks we worked hard that afternoon to get them finished, with the intention of starting back in the morning. Our supper at night almost finished our groceries, leaving us two soda crackers each for breakfast to start on a 70-mile tramp to Medicine Hat. However, we were in luck. After travelling about 16 miles, and reaching the ranch of John Wilson, we struck the round-up camp there and tackled the cook for a meal, which he dished up in good style, while we gave him the tales of our trip; we rewarded him with the number of a dandy half-section which he afterwards filed on, but let go by default. Proceeding on our journey, we spent the night at Tinnies' ranch. The following night found us in the farm home of Mr. Lebreco, 14 miles from the Hat, getting a ride in the rest of our journey. After reaching Medicine Hat, which was then feeling the advance symptoms of the great boom which it had in 1912 and 1913, with that peculiar quality of optimism which characterises all Western booms, we made our plans to meet the following fall, and separated taking employment for the summer.

The 20th October found us back in the Hat. There were about seven or eight settlers in the group, some with the intention of staying out the winter, others going in for a month to erect their buildings, some teaming and some using the river route. The winter set in early that year, and was one of the hardest we have yet experienced. The depth of snow making travel almost impossible, but the first warm days of spring the settlers began to arrive. Shacks and houses sprang up as it were over night, and in the fields could be seen teams of horses and teams of oxen turning over the virgin soil.

CLIMATE

The climate is cold in the winter, and yet one does not suffer from the cold like in the Eastern States and the provinces as the air is dry and very invigorating. Farmers haul grain and provisions nearly every day throughout the winter. Horses and cattle

SERVICE—EVERYTHING

**Imperial
Lumber Yards
Limited**



**GALT COAL
STEAM COAL**

**C. DIEBOLOD, Manager
BINDLOSS**

SOCIAL

SEVENTH ANNUAL

Held Under The Auspices of
JULY

PROGRAM

10.30 a.m.
11.00 a.m.
12.00 noon
1.15 p.m.
1.30 p.m.

100-Yard Dash—Men
50-Yard Dash—Ladies
50-Yard Dash—Fat Men
50-Yard Dash—Girls, 16 and under
100-Yard Dash—Boys, 16 and under
50-Yard Dash—Men's Three-Legged
Potato Race—Girls, 12 and under
100 Yards—Needle -and- Thread Race
(Married couples only)
Sack Race—Boys, 12 and under
100 Yards Men's Relay (4 men to team)
50 Yards, Men's Backward Buggy Race
Half Mile Saddle Race, Free for All
Quarter Mile Slow Race, Owners' Cup
Half Mile, Ladies' Saddle Race
Men's Relay Saddle Race
Quarter Mile, Hitch Up and Unhitch
Cowboy Barrel Race

AERIAL

Bucking Contest.
Ball Game.

AERIAL

Supper.
Dance—Music by Medicine Hat Band
For the Best Bucking Bronco
A Purse of \$40 will be given
Best decorated automobile
Cars will be judged immediately

IMPERIAL LUMBER YARDS
"THE OLD"

Mention Social Plains Booklet when answering advertisements.

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PLAINS

UAL PICNIC

of the Local U. F. A.

d 1920

AMME

Aerial Exhibition

Ball Game

Dinner

Aerial Exhibition

RACES START

First Prize Second Prize

ce

e Horses

EXHIBITION.

\$20

\$10

IBITION.

Prizes Will be Given \$7

\$5

the Ball Games.

y after dinner.

MBER YARDS

ELIABLE"

Imperial Lumber Yards Limited



Briquettes on Hand at
all Times at Empress

R. RICHARDS, Manager
EMPRESS

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THE EMPRESS LUMBER YARDS

EMPRESS

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BINDLOSS

Yards Also

CAVENDISH,

LAPORTE,

MANTARIO.

BUILD YOUR GRANARIES, BARNs, SILOS and HOUSES

From Our Stock.

"Some say lumber is high and wheat too low,"

"When in need of good lumber, come to us and we will show you how far your wheat will go."

For SERVICE, PRICE and QUALITY. You can't beat ours.

Dealers in high-grade building material of all kinds, fence Posts, Hard and Soft Coal.

J. N. ANDERSON,

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Proprietor

See the Fairbanks-Morse Light plant that is supplying light on these grounds and pavilion. Ask the demonstrator all the questions you wish regarding such a plant for YOUR HOME. He will be pleased to answer them.

THE CANADIAN FAIRBANKS-MORSE
COMPANY, LIMITED

CALGARY,

-

-

-

ALBERTA

Mention Social Plains Booklet when answering advertisements.

winter out picking their own living. The horses paw the snow away. Cattle stay along the coulees and on the knolls where the snow does not lie. The monotony of the winter is broken by the warm chinook winds which come through the Crows' Nest Pass from the Pacific Ocean, causing the temperature to rise melting the snow and making the weather like early fall. These warm spells last from a week to 15 days most every month throughout the winter.

The snowfall is not very heavy at any one time. Automobiles are run every month in the year. The first frostfall, generally, is about the 15th September, the land freezing up the beginning of November, though there have been years that plowing was done on into December and no frost until the latter part of October. Winter really sets in about the first week in January, and the snow goes the latter part of March. Seeding, as a rule, is in full sway by the first week in April. Harvest starts about the middle of August. The summer days are warm and long, and the nights are cool.



Kitchener School, **EMPIRE** Social Plains

INTRODUCTION

On April 28, a meeting was called by Local 267 United Farmers of Alberta, at Social Plains School House, to make arrangements for their seventh annual picnic. At that meeting it was decided to print this little book giving a history of the country around Empress from the earliest records on that subject on through the various stages of development down to the present time.

In the latter part of April in the year 1912, we left Medicine Hat with a four-horse team and a complete camping outfit, consisting of tent, bedding, cooking utensils and grub to last us 30 days. There were three women and six men in the party, and we travelled in a north-easterly direction (to rustle out of the wilderness a farm and a home), along the trail known as the Red Deer, what is known as Seven Mile Coulee. We camped for dinner, and while the women cooked dinner, we helped to fix up a wagon that had gotten the better of the ox team that hauled it while coming down the hill, running into the creek and temporarily putting it out of commission. In

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about economy if
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**Farm Lands
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All kinds of repair work
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Agent for Massey Harris,
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Bindloss - Alberta

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conversation with the man driving the ox team, we learned that he was to be a neighbor about four miles west of where we had filed. After an enjoyable dinner, we started out along the trail, now known as the 23 Mile Sand Hills, to a well, known as the Sand Hill well, where we camped the first night, 23 miles from Medicine Hat. Next morning we breakfasted shortly after sunrise, and hit the trail again. The trail being good we made excellent progress. Dinner time brought us to Dis Pan Spring, where we ate dinner, 38 miles from Medicine Hat. From there we made Wilson's ranch, and camped for the second night, 15 miles from our future home. Two miles north from the ranch building we left the Red Deer trail, and travelled in a more easterly direction along the McDonald trail, leading to the Saskatchewan River. The country we had passed through had been more or less hilly, rocky and generally rough, with the trail winding in and out. You may imagine our joy when at about 2 o'clock in the afternoon we came out of the hills and the scene before us was one of the prettiest country I have ever seen, known to-day as Social Plains. Fire had visited the district about six weeks before, and had cleaned the prairie of all dead grass, and there laying before us as far as the eye could see the prairie was covered with the new spring growth of grass. As we proceeded, we came to a rise in the land, and from there we could see the general lay of the land. To the north, the land gently sloped towards the Red Deer River, broken now and again by a small ridge. The land was neither flat nor hilly, but slightly rolling. As we went on, the picture become more beautiful, not a house or shack nor a living soul to be seen, only a few head of cattle and horses were grazing along the trail and now and then a herd of antelope. Looking at our government plots, we saw that we had reached our land, and there we camped, 65 miles from Medicine Hat, our nearest railroad station, to wrestle from a vast wilderness a farm and a home.

As I now sit writing looking back upon the day when the trail was alive with traffic, I smile as I see the picture and forget the hardships that we and hundreds of others endured. For three years, the trail was travelled by various means of freighting, horses, oxen and mules, and now and then a horse and ox hitched to the same wagon, loaded with the necessities of life. From the time we reached the land on which we had filed, shacks began to rise up overnight like mushrooms dotting the prairie everywhere. A few of the married settlers had teams and rude implements to turn over the virgin soil, and they contracted to do breaking for those who had not teams, which enabled them from the revenue thus produced to stay at home while the others sallied forth and worked out to earn a living and pay for ten acres of breaking and save a grub stake for winter when they would come in to do homestead duties.

Once more I am looking over the country, three years later, in the year 1915, it is fall, and what do I see? Fields of grain on every hand. I hear the click of the binder and the roar of the threshing machine. The district had broken the record of the world in producing wheat, over an average of 40 bushels per acre, and yet the harvest next year had even this beaten, and in the fall of 1916, the shacks began to retreat, house after house and barns were built, and there has been a steady procession of houses and barns going up from 1915 until the present date.

Looking back I see the picture of the virgin prairie as I saw it from my first view, then I see the homesteader turning it over some with oxen and others with horses, the first few years only getting enough in to feed the stock. Later on, more was broken and more crops were put in. The crop of 1915 being a bumper with a still better following in 1916, enabling the people to make great progress and from sod houses and shacks, the homesteader and his family moved into modern homes.

Where the furrow once was turned with oxen, those days are passed and gone. The tractors are now turning the furrows and the district is making rapid progress; the people who used to drive to town behind oxen are now driving automobiles.

Service

Alberta Pacific Grain Company Limited

Head Office: Calgary Alta.

Branch Offices: Winnipeg, Man.; Vancouver,
B.C.; Edmonton, Alta.

John McFarland
President & Managing Director

C. M. Hall
Assistant Manager

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The crops were never better, nor conditions more favorable than at the present time for a bumper crop.

What the future holds for this beautiful country of ours, and this district is assured by the Canadian Bank of Commerce at Empress and the Standard Bank at Bindloss, these banks giving liberal credit to farmers and co-operating in every possible way for the advancement of the country.

The roads are of the best beaten out of the prairie. Farmers haul 125 to 150 bushels of wheat to market with four horses, and it is a pleasure to drive a car over the roads in the district.



First Threshing Machine in District

THE PEOPLE

Much has been written and said about this district by people who have travelled through it, but one thing that impresses them is the class of people they come into contact with. The settlers are people who have had farming experience in other districts in Western Canada or United States, and are almost all of Anglo-Saxon origin divided in about equal numbers between settlers from Great Britain, United States and Eastern Canada, forming a combination which is hard to beat, and possess qualities which cannot help but show in the social, economic and intellectual life of the country. The farmers' organizations are strong with a 95 per cent. membership. The women take a great interest in everything, and are nearly all members of the Alberta Women's Institute or the United Farmers' Organization, the school houses furnishing the meeting places for their business meetings, and where, in the winter time, literary societies hold their meetings and are the scene of many wordy debates and of many enjoyable dances. The spirit of co-operation which is rapidly gaining ground among the people through their various organizations in their business affairs is reflected in the social life of the community, and the ready support which the different districts are always ready to extend to any movement that is progressive in its nature.

EATON'S SPECIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT

If at any time you are unable to find your requirements in our Catalogue, write our Special Service Department, telling them of your needs. They will then supply you with detailed information, together with best possible prices, etc.,

WITHOUT CHARGE

or obligation to you. ¶ In house building and lumber, or farm equipment, this service is particularly valuable as our estimators will give suggestions and figures covering the erection of a house or barn, or the equipment of a farm.

DO NOT HESITATE

to make use of this service; it is maintained for your benefit.

THE T. EATON CO. LIMITED
WINNIPEG CANADA

Mention Social Plains Booklet when answering advertisements.

THE LAND

The land in this district is of a gentle rolling nature, free from stone, the soil being of a nice loam of a depth from 15 inches to 2 feet with clay subsoil, making the process of farming a pleasure in comparison with the difficulties encountered in many other sections. This condition is reflected in the large percentage of the ground under cultivation, fully 75 per cent. of the ground being under cultivation, and this in the short space of eight years, a condition which reflects the industrious character of its settlers and the success of the modern process of power farming to which the district is well adapted. One great asset that has been a great boom to the country lies in the water supply, every farm possessing a good well of from 10 to 40 feet in depth. The drilled well is also a success, fine supplies of water being obtained from one hundred and fifty to three hundred feet in depth. Another factor which has helped out greatly is the absence of early fall frosts, the position of the land lying up between the two rivers seemingly acting as a protection from this source. The district during the eight years of its development has shipped a very high percentage of No. 1 wheat.



View of ~~the town~~ ~~Empress~~

TOWN OF EMPRESS

Empress, situated on the banks of the Red Deer River, possesses one of the prettiest townsites to be found in the Canadian West. The town is situated on a gentle slope one-half mile from the edge of the river, ensuring it a fine water supply. The river flats are covered with trees lying about 200 feet below the surrounding country, making an ideal background for a town. The town is destined to become one of the best towns in the West, as it is a C. P. R. divisional point on the road built from Bassano to Swift Current, which was put into operation some five years ago. Railway construction which was delayed by the late war has again started. Construction gangs are at work on new roads, one of them connecting the country from the north west and another road runs in a north-easterly direction connecting Empress with the principal cities in the north.

The townsite is largely owned by the C. P. R., and the completion of the lines at present under construction will mean the beginning of an era of expansion and general prosperity.

We Have Imported Stock

FROM THE BEST HERDS IN AMERICA

Our Hogs are Right.

Our Prices are Right.

We Treat You Right.

TUCKER BROS.

*Breeders and Importers of Big Type
Poland China*

Social Plains, Alberta

*We Paint Auto-
mobiles*

*Upholster and Build
New Tops*

Look us up for prices
and particulars when
in town

**Empress Auto
Rebuilders**

Service

is one of the most important items to consider. To get the very best service out of your tires and tubes you should patronize us for work in

VULCANIZING

when you meet with punctures, cuts or worn treads.

*We give Prompt Attention to
Every Job*

**Empress
Vulcanizing Works**

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CROPS



The principal crops are wheat and oats, though barley, speltz, winter and fall rye are successfully grown. Corn is being grown by quite a number for fodder, and is doing exceedingly well.

This district is part of the Province of Alberta that holds the world's record for the yield of wheat, an average of over forty bushels per acre for two consecutive years (No. 1 Hard Wheat). Oats yield as much as 100 bushels per acre. Individual yields of wheat have been as high as 70 bushels to the acre. The government experimental station which is located in the heart of this district had a yield of oats of 120 bushels per acre in 1916, the largest grain yield of any government for that season. Corn will yield as much as a ton of fodder per acre.

Grasses are being grown by some farmers; brome and rye seem to do best. Many farmers are seeding sweet clover, and alfalfa, though in its infancy, bears signs of doing well.

The district is well adapted for mixed farming. With the growing of corn, dairying and hog-raising will be most profitable operations. Before the settlers, the ranchers' stock in the district numbered approximately 2,000 head. Now the farmers alone have approximately 15,000 head of horses and cattle; the district bids fair to have a quarter of a million in a few years. Hog-raising while it is not very extensively gone into at the present is progressing very favorably, there being several pure-bred herds and the district is shipping hogs out for breeding purposes to the four Western Provinces.



Social Plains Post Office at Present Date

Standard Bank of Canada

—Head Office, Toronto, Ont.—

THE immense resources of Canada must be developed to increase production of wealth to take care of the country's indebtedness and to stimulate a continuous, healthy growth. The Standard Bank of Canada stands behind increased production and legitimate business enterprise.

BRANCHES AT:

Bindloss, Alta.

W. J. Haryett, Manager

Cavendish, Alta.

W. J. Haryett, Manager

Practise
Economic
Buying

*Get the Best
For the Least*

Try

HALLS

General Merchandise

Bindloss - Alberta

Bindloss and Cavendish
Hardware Stores

We solicit your business for HARDWARE, Glass, Paint and Oils.

Goods and Prices Right

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The history and development of Bindloss is an interesting one, despite the fact that it only dates back for a few years. It was in the fall of 1915 that the first signs of any building was noticed, this being the Alberta Pacific Elevator Grain Company, when they started to instal a 35,000-bushel elevator. Shortly after the new year of 1916, Mrs. Falconer, who came with her two sons, erected a general store, they having the agency of the International Harvester Company.

Later on in the summer of the same year this store was taken over by Mr. Robert Hall, who is still there. He heard of the Bindloss and the Social Plains district over at Carmangay, and his business is steadily growing under his good management. The next to appear was the Empress Lumber Yards, with Mr. Moore as manager, in August of 1916, this being really the first business place located at the proper townsite of Bindloss.



The Empress Lumber Yards is located on the east side of Centre Street, and occupies five lots, where they are still in business, and Mr. Moore is still in active charge of the place. In 1916, Bindloss boasted of two general stores, a pool-room and barber shop, restaurant, livery and feed barn, blacksmith and Massey-Harris agency and two elevators.

At this time, the place was handicapped by the lack of communication with other parts of the province and a movement was made then towards getting a station and agent of the C.P.R. Correspondence being directed with the Board of Railway Commissioners by Mr. Moore, and shortly after the New Year of 1917, Bindloss had a station opened by Mr. Much, and development was rapid and sure. The third elevator was put up by J. S. McLeod, and opened by Geo. Chudleigh. Later in the summer of 1917, the Imperial Lumber Yards were opened by Mr. Chas. Thompson, and also a hardware store opened by Messrs. Bartlett & Boughen. In 1918, several residences were erected and more business places, and at the end of the year after the signing of the armistice, the Standard Bank of Canada opened a branch of their bank.

To-day, Bindloss is a complete little town, with several other business places, consisting of an up-to-date garage and a new restaurant, a good school and agency of the Imperial Oil Company, two notary publics and insurance agents, and other professions bringing the town and district before the settlers of the west.

"THE HAIL STORM STRUCK US SUDDENLY ABOUT THREE IN THE AFTERNOON"—

In these few words, a thousand farmers might begin a story of disaster. But John Mitchell, of Monitor, Alberta, has more than that to say. He was insured. He had something more than a policy—he had protection, obtained through the Organized Farmer in Business.

Read his letter —

UNITED GRAIN GROWERS SECURITIES CO. LTD.
CALGARY

Monitor, Alta.

Dear Sirs:—

The hailstorm struck us suddenly about 3 in the afternoon, just as I was about to start for Monitor.

The wind whirled and came in gusts and the hail struck us from the south-west, but before the hail quit falling it was crashing down just as strongly from the north-west.

It lasted 15 or 20 minutes, and as I could see from the house that considerable damage had been done, I resolved to take a run over the crop before going to town so that I could put in my claim.

I made the mistake, through being in a hurry to get to town before the stores closed, of putting in my claim before I had thoroughly looked into the damage done, and on looking over the crop thoroughly I saw I had not claimed enough.

I claimed nothing on the oats or barley, thinking they were young enough to recover, but I soon saw differently, and when your adjuster came I told him about my mistake, and he allowed me to revise my claim.

THE RESULT WAS THAT I GOT NEARLY HALF AS MUCH MORE DAMAGES AS I HAD ORIGINALLY CLAIMED and was perfectly satisfied although the worst hailed piece of wheat turned out much worse than I thought it was at time of adjustment.

Yours truly,

(Signed) JOHN MITCHELL.

IS YOUR 1920 CROP COVERED AGAINST HAIL ?

The hailstorms are rapidly approaching. Where will they strike? Will it be your farm?

Protect yourself now. Give your Hail Insurance Application to the agent in your district who represents the Organized Farmers in the Hail Insurance business. If you do not know who it is, write direct to the Insurance Department of this Company at Calgary, Saskatoon or Winnipeg.

Another thing. You believe in the Farmers' movement. Then put your business when you can through the Farmers' Company. Your business added to that of other farmers makes the Company a greater factor in the business world. The earnings on your business go to strengthen the organization.

UNITED GRAIN GROWERS SECURITIES
COMPANY LTD.

The Organized Farmer in Business

CALGARY

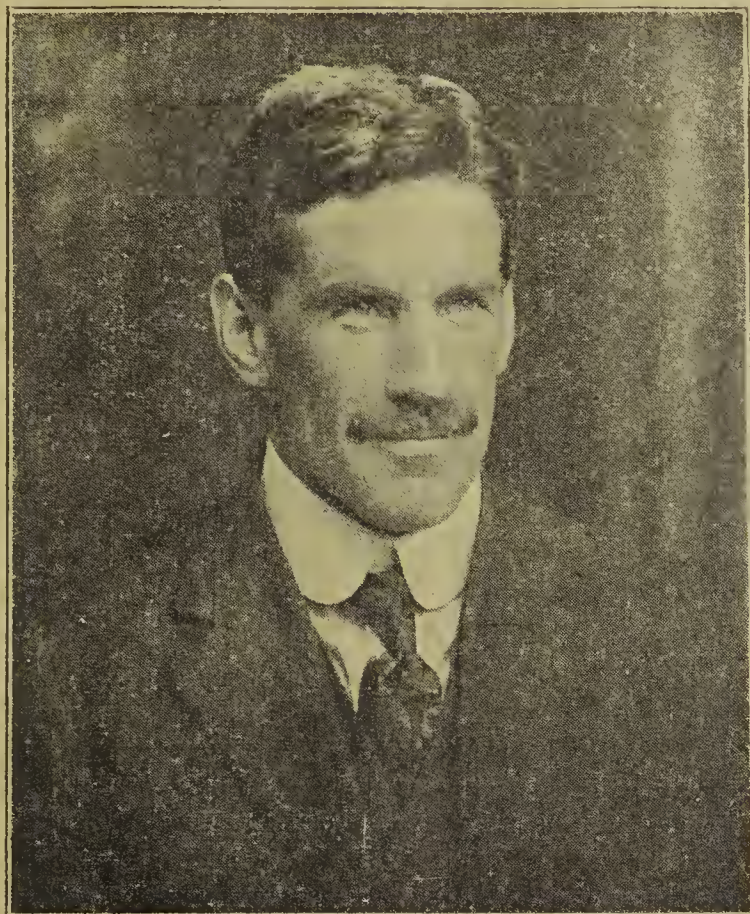
SASKATOON

WINNIPEG

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Bindloss is the centre of a large agricultural district, both north and south of the Red Deer River. There are good business opportunities for a drug and stationery store, and meat market. There is more elevator room to handle the crop, which is now

First Settlement



in sight. These few additions, with the installation of the rural telephone that is in course of erection, covering a large territory south through the Social Plains district and east, make Bindloss a centre of activity for the good country north and south of the Red Deer River.

The Hudson's Bay Co'y *Mail Order Service*

CALGARY

OUR Mail Order Department is thoroughly organized for the quick transaction of business. Your requests for information, samples of merchandise receive intelligent attention with the least possible delay. Whenever you require any article and cannot visit our store, write. All the advantages of selecting from new, fashionable, dependable merchandise are fully yours when ordering by mail as if you came in person ---there is never any risk about what you buy at this store. Tell us what you want, if to substitute or not, and if you send too much money we will return your change. We are in this business to serve you if you will let us. Popular goods at popular prices, selling on close margins, and one price to all, makes this a safe place to trade, whether by mail or person. To commence with we would like to have your name for our grocery catalogue. Will you send it?

The Hudson's Bay Company

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MOST PEOPLE DON'T STOP TO REASON

about the difference in Business Colleges.

They take a great deal for granted and trust largely to the fact that they are all very much the same.

There is just as much difference in Business Colleges as there is in diamonds. The same care and attention should be given to the selection of the school you attend as you would give to the purchase of a diamond.

The Garbutt Business College for 13 years has been a recognized authority and leader in business training; and each year shows a greater improvement. The high standard of excellence set by the Garbutt Business College, and the splendid quality of the work done in this school is proof conclusive of their request for your consideration.

Ask to-day for information concerning the course in which you are interested.

GARBUTT BUSINESS COLLEGE

509 Eighth Ave. West

CALGARY

(Constant Excellence of Service)

CHINOOK BEER

CHINOOK STOUT

CHINOOK ALE

Sold by all Hotels and
Restaurants through-
out the country.

Watch for the label
with the big

HORSESHOE

Manufactured by

Calgary Brewing & Malting Co., Ltd.

CALGARY

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ALBERTA

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FOR **SERVICE**
QUALITY AND
SATISFACTION

— Send to —

THE WESTERN PRINTING & LITHOGRAPHING
COMPANY, LIMITED

CALGARY

ALBERTA

We have the largest printing plant and the only
lithographing establishment between Winnipeg and
the Coast